

Helping Parents Support, Monitor, and Advocate For Their Children

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Strong Family Partnerships

Parents 3 key roles:

1. They support their children's education at home.
2. They monitor their progress.
3. They advocate for them when necessary.

Research from Luz Santana, Dan Rothstein, and Agnes Bain - *Partnering With Parents to Ask the Right Questions* (2016)



Helping Parents Build Their Skills

When parents learn these two skills, they greatly improve their ability to support, monitor, and advocate for their child:

- ▶ They formulate and use questions effectively.
- ▶ They participate effectively in decisions that affect them.



Support

- ▶ In this role, parents help, encourage, and provide for their children. They also support the work of teachers and school on behalf of their children.
- ▶ Think about the different activities you are doing currently as a parent to support your children's education.
- ▶ Brainstorm.
- ▶ Share out.



Ideas to Support

Parents:

- ▶ Meet their children's basic health, nutritional, and emotional needs.
- ▶ Communicate that they consider education a priority and create space and time for children to do schoolwork at home.
- ▶ Do their best to ensure students arrive safely to school and return safely home.
- ▶ Support the work of teachers and the school on behalf of their children.



Monitor

- ▶ In this role, parents keep track of their children's progress and pay attention to their children's needs. They monitor their children's entire school experience, how they are doing academically and socially, and how the school is meeting their needs.
- ▶ Think about the different activities you are doing as a parent to monitor your children's education.
- ▶ Brainstorm.
- ▶ Share out.



Ideas to Monitor

Parents:

- ▶ Keep track of their children's progress.
- ▶ Pay attention to their children's needs.
- ▶ Monitor their children's entire school experience.
- ▶ Monitor how they are doing academically and socially.
- ▶ Monitor how the school is meeting their needs.



Advocate

- ▶ As advocates, parents make specific requests on behalf of their children. They can also address issues individually or as part of an organized group at the classroom, school, and district levels.
- ▶ Think about examples of how you advocate for your children.
- ▶ Brainstorm.
- ▶ Share out.



Ideas to Advocate

Parents:

- ▶ Speak up and make specific requests on behalf of their children.
- ▶ Act as advocates for meeting the needs of all children.
- ▶ Address issues individually or as part of an organized group at the classroom, school, and district levels.



Reflect

- ▶ What could happen if you support your child but don't monitor his progress?
- ▶ What could happen if you support and monitor but don't advocate?
- ▶ What did you learn?
- ▶ How can you use it?
- ▶ Share out.



Support, Monitor, & Advocate Action Plan

Support, Monitor, and Advocate Action Plan

To Support, I will...	To Monitor, I will...	To Advocate, I will...



Question Formulation Technique

- ▶ This is a process that allows anyone who uses it to learn how to produce their own questions, improve their questions, and strategize about how to use them.
- ▶ Use with Parents, Students, Teachers, Community Members



Ideal School District/School

- Visualize what your ideal school district or school looks like?
- Choose whether you are in a parent or a community role?
- What does family & community engagement look like?



Question Focus

- Creating a Family School
 - This is your focus to brainstorm your questions around.



Ideas for Question Focus

- Your child has been referred for an IEP.
- Your child will be held back in the same grade for one more year.
- Creating a bully-proof school.
- Creating a safe learning environment.
- The school is switching from traditional grading to mastery-based.
- The school is switching from a traditional program to customized learning.



Rules for Producing Questions

- Ask as many questions as you can.
- Do not stop to discuss, judge, or answer the questions.
- Write down every question exactly as stated.
- Change any statements into questions.
- Number your questions.



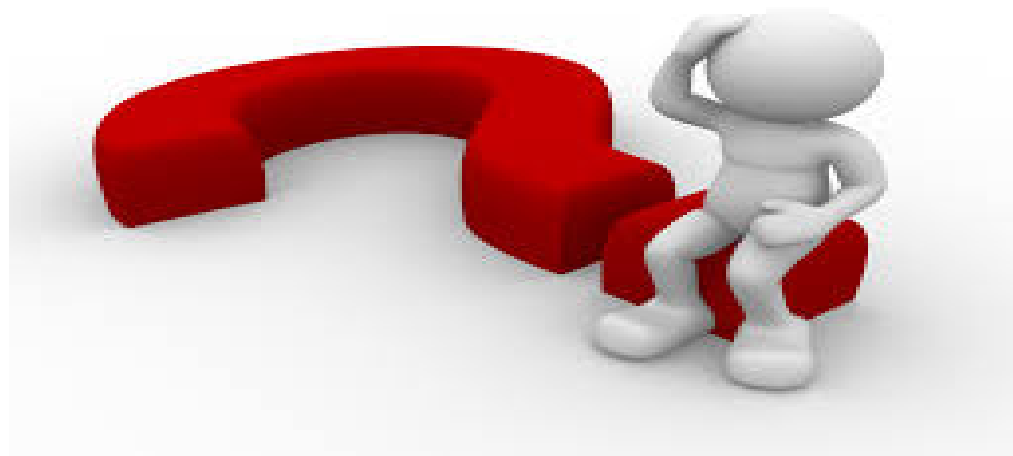
Types of Questions

- Close-ended questions
 - Can be answered with one word.
- Open-ended questions
 - Require an explanation or more information.
- Look at your questions and write a C or O beside each one.



Change Questions

- Look at your questions again.
- If you have a close-ended question, change it to an open-ended question.
- If you have an open-ended question, change it to a close-ended question.



Prioritization Instructions

- Which 3 questions are the most important to you? Which 3 questions do you want answered first?
- Which 3 questions will help you address the problem immediately?
- Which 3 questions will help you figure out your next steps?



Action Steps

Question Focus	
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Action Step	Person Responsible	Measures/Strategies	Target Completion Date



Resources

- ▶ j.burckhard@tie.net
- ▶ www.rightquestion.org
- ▶ All of the materials are in the resources listed under my presentation.

